



WISCONSIN

**DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**  
Division of Economic Support  
Bureau of Welfare Initiatives

**TO: Economic Support Supervisors  
Economic Support Lead Workers  
Training Staff  
FSET Administrative and Provider Agencies  
Child Care Coordinators  
W-2 Agencies**

**BWSP OPERATIONS MEMO**

**No.: 99-76**

**File: 1120**

**Date: 10/15/99**

**Non W-2 ☒ W-2 ☐ CC ☐**

**PRIORITY: High**

**FROM: Stephen M. Dow  
Program Implementation Team  
Policy Analysis and Program Implementation Section**

**SUBJECT: FOOD STAMP/MEDICAID/BADGERCARE MAIL-IN RECERTIFICATION**

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**CROSS REFERENCE:** Food Stamp Handbook, Appendix 21.0.0  
BWI Operations Memos 98-84 & 99-16

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Immediately.

**PURPOSE**

Medicaid (MA), BadgerCare (BC) and some Food Stamp (FS) participants will now be able to complete program recertification by mail.

1. FS participants will be able to use the mail-in recertification process at alternate recertifications.
2. MA and BC participants will be able to use the mail-in recertification process at any review as long as one face-to-face recertification is done every 12 months.

**Quarterly Reporting**

The Mail-In Recertification form makes reference to Quarterly Reporting. DWD has applied for a quarterly reporting waiver from the US Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (USDA/FNS). We will notify you when the waiver is approved and can be implemented.

**Y2K**

In the event that there are problems with the CARES system because of Y2K, the Mail-In Recertification form can be used at face-to-face interviews to record information which can later be entered in CARES.

**POLICY**

DWD has received a waiver from USDA/FNS that allows FS groups subject to a 3 month certification period to complete alternate recertifications by mail or telephone.

FS groups subject to 3-month reviews should be offered either the telephone or mail-in recertification as long as the group's certification period has not expired. The conditions placed on the telephone recertification process (employment or participation in W-2 for more than 30 hours a week, unavailability of an able-bodied adult who appear for a face-to-face interview) are no longer valid. The use of the telephone or mail-in recertification is at the option of the eligibility specialist, and a face-to-face recertification interview may be required of the FS group if the worker believes accurate, reliable information will not be obtained using the non-face-to-face process. However, if the group is otherwise eligible for a telephone or mail-in recertification, the economic support worker must document in CARES the reason(s) why a face-to-face interview is being required.

All groups **must be granted a face-to-face** interview if the household or its authorized representative **requests** one.

## **PROCESS**

### *Form*

DES has initiated a FS/MA/BC Mail-in Recertification/Quarterly Report Form (DES No. 11845), that includes a Verification Examples list on the last page. A facsimile of the form is included in this memo.

Attached to this Operation Memo is form DES No. 11845 and model client letter (CARES letter NAFR). The form will be published in the DES Forms Repository on the Intranet within three weeks of the date of this Operations Memo. A printing of the forms will be done and distributed to all counties and tribes. The forms will be translated into Spanish in the near future.

### **CARES**

For eligible cases the recertification process will begin with CARES sending the client a notice that the group is due for a review within 45 days.

CARES will also send an alert to the eligibility worker. The review due alerts are being altered to let the worker know if the last review held was face-to-face (FTF) or not (NFTF).

1. Alert 084 (Eligibility Review Past Due) will not be changed since a face-to-face review must be held for late FS reviews.
2. Alert 085 (Eligibility Review due) will be inactivated and replaced with 2 new alerts:

- a. 290 (Review Due, last review was NFTF)

When a worker receives alert 290, a FTF review must be scheduled for this case.

- b. 291 (Review Due, last review was FTF)

At the first review after an intake, the worker will receive alert 291 since intakes must always be FTF.

When a worker receives alert 291, a NFTF review *may* be scheduled for this case if FS is open Check screen ANRH (the review history screen) to be sure of the review status.

These alerts are merely informational and will be sent even if the FS assistance group is closed.

Refer to BWI Operations Memo 99-16 for detailed information on Review Dates.

## *Review Activities*

The eligibility worker or the support staff will pull the CARES list showing the cases that have been sent a 45-day review notice. The list will have a new indicator, which shows if the most recent review was face-to-face. If the last review was not face-to-face, then the next FS review must be in person and no further action needs to be taken with the telephone or mail-in recertification process. MA and BC require a face-to-face recertification review every 12 months. W-2 will continue to require a face-to-face recertification interview at least every 6 months.

If the group is eligible for a mail-in recertification, then the clerical worker or eligibility worker should mail to the client the Mail-in Recertification form and Verification Examples form.

The **worker** must fill in all the **shaded spaces** on the Mail-in Recertification form.

Mail the forms no later than the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the last month of the certification period. Include with the forms a cover letter explaining the mail-in recertification process and informing the client that he or she can request a face-to-face recertification interview if desired. A model cover letter is attached. This model letter will become a standard letter (NAFR) in CARES in the near future (see BWI Operations Memo 98-84 for information on using CARES letters).

The date that the form and verifications must be returned to the agency by the client should be no less than 15 days after the forms are mailed to the group, approximately the 5<sup>th</sup> of the last month of the certification period. The correct "last review" date to enter in the first paragraph of page one of the Mail-In Recertification form is shown on the Eligibility Review Question History screen (ANRH). This screen will also tell the worker whether the last review was face-to face, and if the last review was for MA only. If the last review was for MA only, then the FS certification period must have ended and a new application with a face-to-face interview must be done to re-open the FS case.

The client should fill out, sign and return the Mail-in Recertification form to the agency by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month. However, as long as a signed Mail-in Recertification form is received by the agency before the end of the current certification period the eligibility worker must process it. The FS/MA agency must stamp the Mail-in Recertification form with the date it was returned to the agency. If the form and/or verifications are received from the client after adverse action but before the end of the certification period, that may delay benefits, but should not terminate benefits or pro-rate benefits. If the forms are received after the end of the certification period the person must come in for a face-to-face interview to re-open the case, and benefits will be pro-rated unless one of the exceptions apply.

If the client is only recertifying for MA or BC, he or she does not have to fill out the sections on Shelter Expenses or Student status.

If the Mail-in Recertification form is incomplete, answered incorrectly, or lacking required verification, do not send the form back to the client. Enter into CARES the information provided, placing a "?" in CARES where verification is missing. Send the client a CARES generated verification checklist. If clarification or additional information is needed, it is appropriate to telephone the client to obtain the information. Document the contact in case comments. The client must be allowed 10 days from the date verification is requested to provide the verification. This may delay benefits but it should not terminate or pro-rate benefits if the verification is received after the end of the certification period but within 10 days of the date the request for verification.

The FS worker must enter the information received in the Recertification form and run the review. The eligibility worker must enter the date the signed Mail-in Recertification form was **returned to the agency** (date stamp on first page) on ACPA and ANSE.

Any information on the form that does not go on a CARES screen must be transferred to the Case Comment screens in CARES via CMCC and case number parms. Confirm benefits when and if appropriate.

Retain the Mail-in Recertification form in the case file as required by Division of Economic Support record retention policy.

CARES screens ANRQ and ANRH should be used in the same way for mail-in recertifications as telephone recertifications. See OM 99-16 for a detailed discussion.

## **CONTACTS**

DES Call Center	Phone: 608-261-6317
	Fax: 608-261-6968

**MODEL LETTER - Mail In Food Stamp/Medicaid/BadgerCare**

Agency Name  
Street Address  
City, State Zip

State of Wisconsin  
Dept. of Workforce Development

QUESTIONS: Ask your worker

Date  
Case Name  
Case Number  
Worker Name  
Worker Number  
Phone No.

Client Name  
  
Street Address  
City, State Zip

I must review your eligibility for Food Stamps/Medicaid/BadgerCare assistance. You can complete this review by mail if you wish. **If you prefer to come to my office for a face-to-face interview, contact me immediately and an appointment will be scheduled.** If a review is not completed by \_\_\_\_\_ your benefits will end. If the review process is delayed, your benefits will also be delayed.

Enclosed are a Mail-In Recertification form and a Verification Examples list. Complete the form to reflect any changes since your last review, which was held on \_\_\_\_\_. When you have completed the form and signed it, return it to the office listed above along with any documents that verify or prove changes in your household's circumstances. Look at the Verification Examples form for examples of the type of document that you may need to mail in with your Recertification form.

You must turn in the Mail-In Recertification form and documentation by \_\_\_\_\_. A verification checklist may also be sent to you after I have reviewed the information you mail in to me. Send any required verification documents to me within 10 days of receiving the checklist. Failure to return these documents may result in termination or delay of your benefits. If you do not send verification of expenses that you claim, your review will be processed without the claimed expense deduction.

If you are unable to comply with the eligibility review process for good cause and the agency does not accept your good cause reason(s), you have the right to a Fair Hearing.

Remember:

1. If you fail to contact me by \_\_\_\_\_, you will be required to have a face-to-face interview to re-open your case.
2. You may be required to provide additional information or verification in order to process your review.
3. If you have questions, please call me at my number listed above.

DISABILITY FOOTER